FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

First Class

To:

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BERKELEY, CAL.

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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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VOL. 5 NO. 9
FIRST ISSUE OF
MAY 1975
Issue #107

TECHICAL COMMENTS ON THIS SCAN OF THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE:

The Editor/Publisher of RTN had serious troubles printing this issue. He had just invested in a home-operated printing press, to save the costs of having the issues printed at a local Berkeley print shop. There were "big time" teething pains, such that this issue (#107) was somewhat reprinted in issue #108., as you will see if you look at that one. The scans you see following here were what I could salvage in scanning the originals in 2021. So, in this issue, you'll see the "standard" style scan, then (for the worst pages), additional scans with higher contrast color, and also a black-and-white scan.

I also tried enhancing the page(s) with an image manipulation program, but it was a bit beyond my skills to extract a much better rendering that way. Doing so may be possible, so if it's in your range of skill, feel free to extract the JPG original pages and have a go. If you get something amazing, please add it into this set of RTNs!

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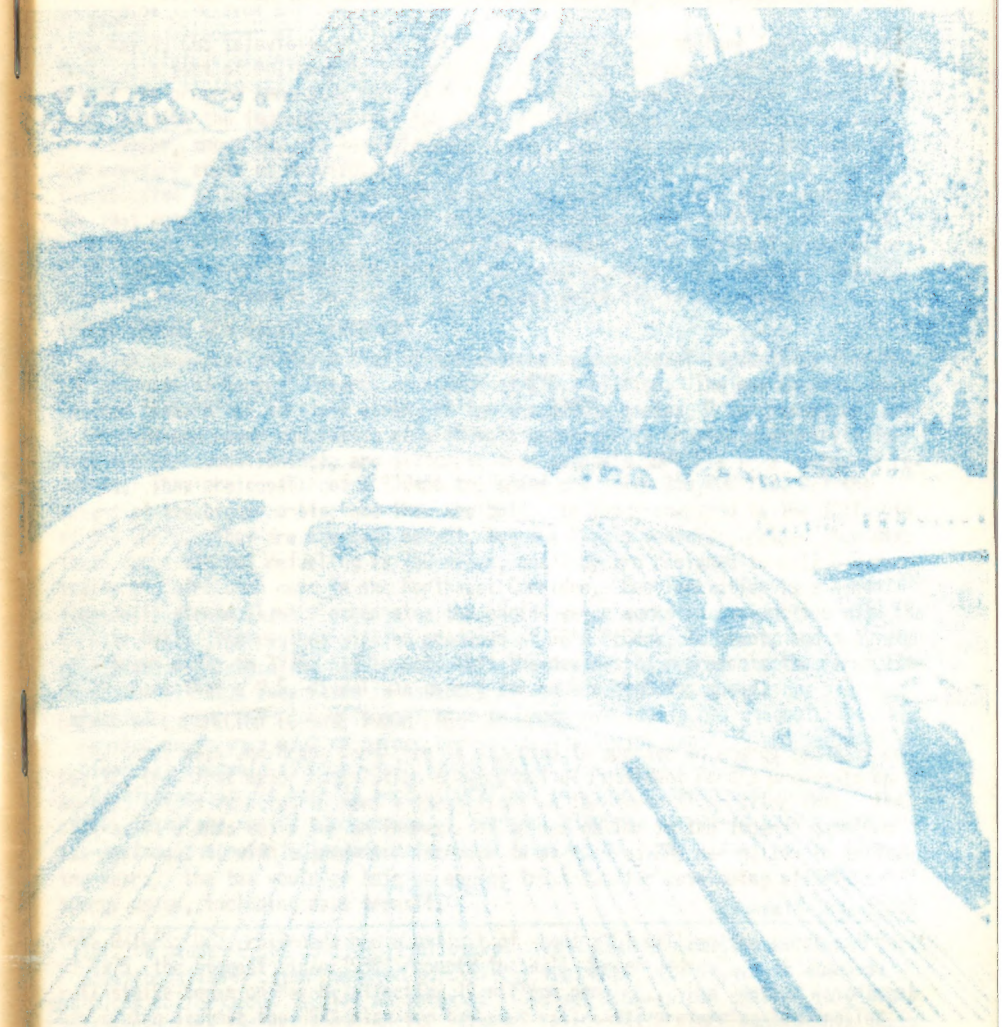

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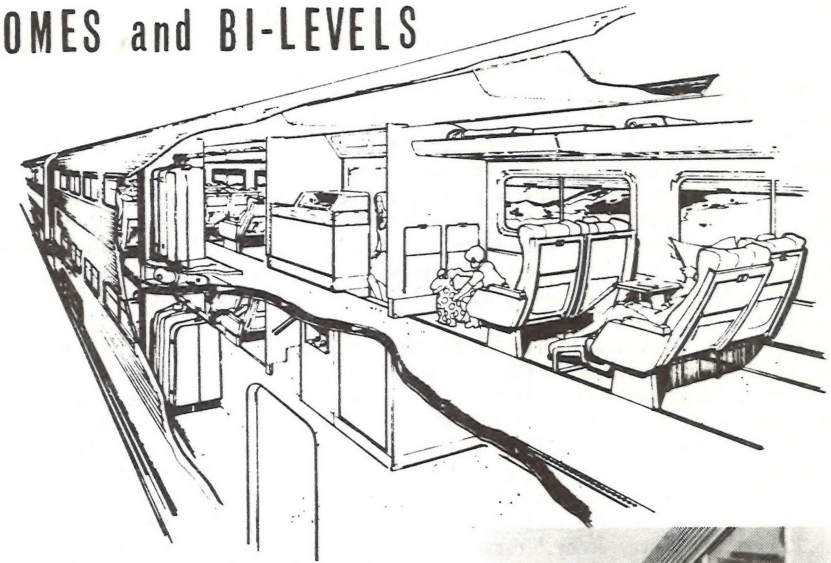
The House Ways and Means Committee is expected to approve an energy tax bill on May 12, the first major legislation growing out of President Ford's proposals on energy. It is expected to meet a tough fight on the House floor after that. The bill as it stands calls for an increase of 3¢ per gallon in the federal gasoline tax next Jan. 1, with a graduated increase to as much as 20¢ per gallon in following years. The tax would go into an energy trust fundfor developing efficient energy usage, including mass transit.

NEWS BRIEFS: U.S. railroads had a deficit of about $151 million the first quarter of 1975, the biggest since 1938, reports the Wall Street Journal... A Japanese rail strike began on May 8, affecting 19 million people... The Justice Department has spoken against the USRA plan for bankrupt railroads, preferring "controlled liquidation," selling lines off to non-bankrupt roads; the administration is said to privately prefer this method... Amtrak's spring nationwide timetable is due out soon, dated May 15...

DOMES and BI-LEVELS

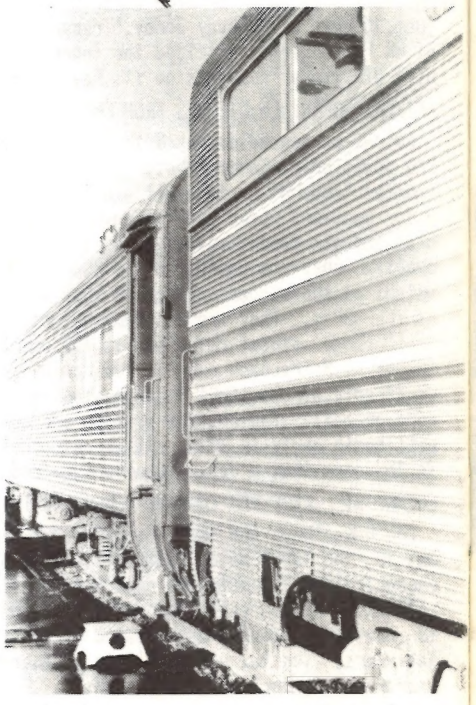


Judging from our mail, no topic in passenger railroading is of such intense and continued interest as the subject of dome cars and of their use on such well-known trains of the near past as the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR.

With Amtrak's April 2 announcement (see RTN, 1st April Issue) of the order placed with Pullman-Standard for 235 newly-designed bi-level cars inspired by Santa Fe's hi-level cars, an ominous question is raised: will America ever again see a new dome car on the rails?

Amtrak's present commitment for the future seems to be to go with bi-levels for its major cruise trains. Amtrak's recent equipment orders, planned in the hatchet-man days of the previous administration, under the scrutiny of thrift-conscious Nixon-Ehrlichman-Ash-Brinegar types, will determine the quality of rail travel in coming years.

Tho Amtrak states that "Because of the bi-level design, most of the passengers will enjoy 'dome-car visibility'", the truth is that nice as they may be, bi-levels are in no way a substitute for domes. On the following pages Glenn Lee discusses ways in which domes and bi-levels can coexist.



(Top) Cutaway drawing by Amtrak of upper and lower sections of bi-level coach. (Above) Height comparisons of conventional passenger car and Santa Fe hi-level car on Amtrak's SOUTHWEST LIMITED. Photo by Message Media.

Future of the Dome Car

BY GLENN LEE

Dome cars operated by Amtrak could be substantially improved by minor changes in design. Such design changes need not be costly, and would result in substantial increases in the pleasure of the traveling public.

With the end of smoking privileges in the dome sections, ashtrays in the arm rests and built into the rear of preceding seats should be eliminated. "No Smoking" signs should not be placed in dome windows, but rather on bulkheads or on the rear sections of seats.

Night lights, now usually of small white bulbs at the aisle level, should be replaced with blue lights, such as UP formerly used in late model coaches. These would reduce reflection glare on the windows at night, which greatly reduces the pleasure of night viewing. As a passenger aboard the CANADIAN, I found that timetables or newspapers could cover such lights and greatly improve the pleasure of after-sundown viewing.

Foot rests could be removed. Taking a cue from the "Architecture of Inconvenience" used in designing lunch counter stools at stores like Woolworth's (designed to promote rapid turnover), I would remove footrests from the domes. Not only would this help increase turnover a bit in the limited facilities, but it would also eliminate the irritating "clank-clank-clank" noise that children seem to enjoy producing all too often.

Dome interiors should be painted a dark color to help reduce reflections into the glass that reduce viewing pleasure. A major offender in this area was the otherwise almost flawless EMPIRE BUILDER dome coach. Its bright yellow paint on dome bulkheads and stringers produced more reflection than the otherwise stimulating and cheery tones were worth.

DOMES VS. BI-LEVELS

Amtrak's present planning, overlooking the dome car, may be setting aside the single most important development in rail travel since development of the air brake, or air conditioning, or both. Nothing spurred public re-interest in railroads after World War II as much as the advent of the dome car; and many believe that the dome car helped resist the decline in traffic in the 1960's more than any single other passenger train feature.

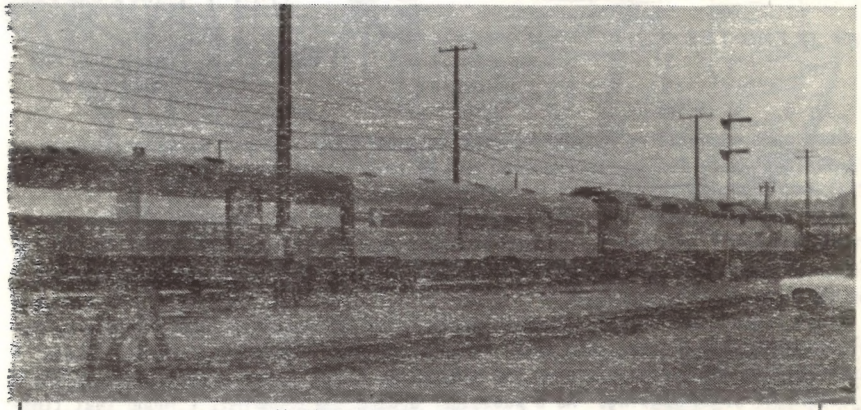
A man's magazine once quoted retired Union Pacific President Stoddard (who had ordered the line's 40-some dome cars in 1955) in saying that domes had attracted substantial additional patronage "Even where we didn't have much scenery."

While the bi-level coach now being developed for long distance trains will have an important role to play in increasing long distance revenue, it cannot, and should not be considered as the successor to the dome car.

The bi-level coach will be most successful on routes not overly endowed with scenery. It will be decreasingly useful in attracting passengers as the proportion of major scenic attractions increases. Thus, the bi-level would be inappropriate for the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR route, or along the "Thousand Miles of Mountains" of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA route.

Rather than dividing Amtrak equipment orders into large blocks of rolling stock under the general labels "corridor" or "long distance," additional refinements in planning should be instituted. One such refinement might be the "Scenic Dome Train" category. Failure by Amtrak to develop such a concept might lead, eventually, to requests that Congress itself institute such a concept.

On a "Scenic Dome Train" route, bi-level cars would be limited in use, or perhaps eliminated entirely. This would lead to development of the more conventional type of dome train. On some routes, where the amount of scenery is somewhat limited, one or two dome coaches might be included ahead of bi-level coaches.



NO DOME FOR THE PRESIDENT

When Amtrak president Paul Reistrup headed eastward on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR on April 4, the consist of his train (above) included no dome car. The SP-type dome lounges regularly assigned to the train have mostly been out of service the past few months, and rumors are that most of them (one is currently back in operation) have such bad leaks around the window framework that they won't be repaired. In the meantime, car 9381, former Milwaukee Road Super Dome 57 (built by Pullman-Standard in 1952), has emerged from the P-S shops where Amtrak had it outfitted with high-density coach seating in the dome, a la Auto-Train, and it is scheduled to go onto the SFZ, apparently only Chicago-Denver. It made its appearance in the Chicago coach yards on May 4. Photo by Message Media.

The opportunities are substantial to develop a reasonable mix of equipment, including the matching of dome capacity to scenic miles. Such concepts would represent a gradual replacement of "quantity" thinking at Amtrak with "hand-crafting" or "fine tuning" of consists to make Amtrak trains truly distinctive.

DOME-ORIENTED TRAINS: Dome-oriented trains would be those with few or no bi-level cars. They would include major long distance routes with large amounts of scenery, such as mountains, canyons, rivers, or other watercourses such as bays, sounds or lakes. Major dome-oriented trains would, for example, operate on the routes of the EMPIRE BUILDER, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, COAST STARLIGHT, and other such existing trains. Future trains to receive "dome-oriented" status might include the SHASTA DAYLIGHT, a daylight run on the BUTTE SPECIAL route, the TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR runs, and of course the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR.

TRAINS WITH SOME DOMES: Many rail routes, while not featuring scenery in large amounts, nevertheless contain enough viewing interest to justify some dome cars. In such trains, one or two dome coaches of the regular existing design might be placed ahead of several bi-level coaches. Union Pacific, for

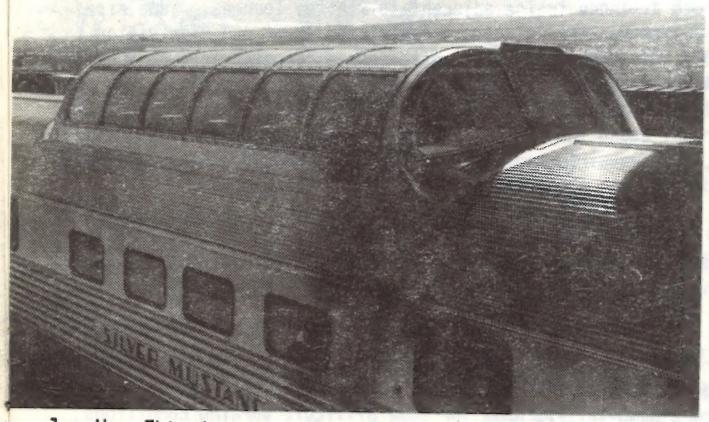
all practical purposes, admitted its routes were somewhat deficient in scenery by placing only one dome coach each, for instance, on its CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CITY OF PORTLAND, and CITY OF ST. LOUIS trains. Were these runs to be operated by Amtrak, they might be considered for bi-level coaches preceeded in the consist by one or two dome coaches. On these runs, the importance of the comfort and operating economies of the bi-level car overshadow, but do not completely eliminate, the dome car.

NON-DOME TRAINS: Some routes would be considered deficient enough in scenic attractions that a completely successful passenger train operation could be conducted without domes. Any need for additional viewing convenience on such runs could be met by including a car such as the EL CAPITAN lounge, which included high windows, partially curved into the roof lines.

The above categories would, of course, be subject to review and change; but might well initially represent the most feasible means of allocating scarce resources during a period in which the demand for new Amtrak rolling stock will be very high from all quarters--including Amtrak executives, passengers, and Congress. Making the above types of distinctions will help ensure that when it comes to new equipment, Amtrak will not be "throwing out the baby with the bath" nor making sudden decisions that will be repented in leisure, when it comes to domes.

VARIOUS TYPES OF DOMES

By far the most popular type of dome car in the United States has been the Budd-built "short dome," which has been used on many dome trains, including the Zephyr runs, NORTH COAST LIMITED, EMPIRE BUILDER, CANADIAN, among the most well-known. This dome seats 24 persons under a roof line just about 20 feet in



Budd-built dome coach "Silver Mustang" was photographed recently on the RGZ at Grand Junction. (See p. 13 for interior shot of similar dome.) Photos by Message Media.

length. This dome has been worked into coach, lounge-dormitory, sleeping, parlor, and sleeper-lounge-observation configurations.

A similar design was developed by ACF for Union Pacific and Wabash, and featured a roof line some 24 feet in length, offering additional spaciousness for the same 24 seats. The ACF dome also featured windows which began slightly lower adjacent to the seats, and ended in a larger covered area above the aisle. This meant that one single curved glass panel on each side did the work of two such glass panels in the Budd dome. Side viewing was easier, and the larger covered top panel helped shield more rays from direct sun overhead.

Development of a new dome prototype by Amtrak would require close review of both designs, as well as the flat-glass model produced by Pullman-Standard.

The Budd design allowed from 46 to 56 seats on the main seating level of a coach; whereas the ACF dome, as it was larger, reduced seating to only 36 in the coach model used on Union Pacific.

FULL-LENGTH DOME: The full-length dome was developed in the early 1950's to allow railroads to equip premier trains with dome accommodation at lower cost. Normally one full-length dome saved the necessity of purchasing a number of short domes for each consist. Santa Fe and Milwaukee Road achieved dome car status for a number of trains this way, and only Great Northern regularly operated both short domes and a full-length dome in the same consist--on the EMPIRE BUILDER. (During the period 1961-1963, UP operated its own short ACF dome coaches and Milwaukee Road full-length domes on coach-only CHALLENGER trains during peak travel periods.)

The Great Northern and Santa Fe full domes were built by Budd, and were considered by some to be superior to the Pullman-Standard dome used by Milwaukee Road and later sold to Canadian National. On the Budd models a wide overhead section above the aisle was supported by stringers allowing only 12 glass side sections, which provided much unobstructed viewing, while allowing fewer overhead rays of sun to penetrate the car. The Pullman-Standard model required at least twice the number of side glass panels, which interrupted vision more often.

In the future, full-length domes might be useful on Amtrak on the scenic-dome trains, or in the sleeping car sections of the trains carrying more limited numbers of domes.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC DOME: The SP- type dome represents a successful variation on the full-length dome. Custom built from the frames of standard passenger cars, the dome enclosed not only a raised observation level, but also the beverage lounge on the main floor. This latter feature created a high ceiling of glass, which was an exceptionally distinctive feature. This type of car would be ideal for low-clearance routes in the east; and in the west could be added to the consists of regular long distance trains adjacent to flattop lounges. (One disadvantage of the SP design was the relatively restricted front and rear vision.)

In the late 1960's, CN added full domes westbound at Edmonton to SUPER CONTINENTAL and PANORAMA runs, adjacent to regular lounges, which remained in the consist. This was at least partially due to the feeling that there was more animation (and less torpor) among the long distance passengers as the trains passed thru scenic areas, thus requiring additional lounge space (the domes) that would not have been needed in less scenic zones.

DOME DINING CAR: Perhaps my single most enjoyable dome car ride (of many) was in the early 1960's, aboard a Union Pacific dome diner westbound in the all-sleeper CITY OF LOS ANGELES, descending Weber Canyon into Ogden. This was a memorable experience, and I thus am among those who feel that a new generation of train riders should not be denied the pleasure of an excellent meal served in the dome dining car.

Union Pacific encountered a number of operational problems with dome diners. The higher seating capacity of the dome diner, coupled with the need to serve the dome meals from a dumb-waiter, made for some difficult working conditions for the crew. The need for crew members to constantly run up and down dome stairs further added to crew fatigue. In addition, UP staff claimed that some dome dining seats were hard to obtain after the first servings, as passengers tended to linger in the dome. Those who were unable to obtain dome seats at later servings were, of course, disappointed.

Nevertheless, dome diners should be tried, once again, on select and prestige Amtrak runs. A dining car reservation system would help reduce disappointments and frustrations. On transcontinental runs, for instance, passengers unable to obtain a dome dining car reservation the first night out would be given first choice on such seats the second night out. Problems of this type can be worked out with good management.

Reviving the California Zephyr

NOT SO DIFFICULT A TASK

by Glenn Lee

Glenwood Springs, Mar. 19:
Recent announcements by the Rio Grande that it would not seek to discontinue its RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR tri-weekly passenger train between Denver and Salt Lake City may pave the way for the revival of its predecessor train, the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR. The continued existence of the RGZ indicates possibilities for resumed thru-car movement between Chicago and Oakland, which would be in addition to the daily SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR runs.

A prototype for the revived thru-car service is Southern Railway's handling of thru Amtrak New York-Los Angeles sleeping cars over the portion of the route between Washington DC and New Orleans.

Revival of the tri-weekly CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR would eliminate the need to further stretch the already too slow schedule of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR runs; and would allow more passenger capacity on the Denver-Chicago portion of the run than would be allowed by a single SFZ run. The SFZ is often a full-capacity train between Chicago and Denver during peak summer and winter periods, and would be unable to accommodate large increases in patronage if re-scheduled to meet RGZ runs at Denver.

A revived CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR would result in a real and major improvement in transcontinental service along the nation's middle east-west rail corridor. The increased costs to Amtrak, stemming mainly from new tri-weekly Amtrak trains operating Chicago-Denver and Salt Lake City-Oakland, would be modest in comparison with the results. Amtrak's Chicago-Seattle thru service, with EMPIRE BUILDER and NORTH COAST HIAWATHA runs, already ten trips per week in the off-season, the same number as proposed here.

SCHEDULE:

Utilizing the existing running times Chicago-Denver and Utah Gateway-Oakland, the following schedule for the tri-weekly CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR runs would be initiated:

Westbound Read Down		Eastbound Read Up
	CHICAGO-DENVER via AMTRAK	
1:15pm	lv Chicago	ar 5:10pm
10:00pm	ar Omaha	lv 7:55am
10:10pm	lv "	ar 7:45am
6:45am	ar Denver	lv 10:00pm
	DENVER-SALT LAKE via RIO GRANDE	
7:30am	lv Denver	ar 9:30pm
9:30pm	ar Salt Lake City	lv 7:30am
	SALT LAKE-OAKLAND via AMTRAK	
10:00pm	lv Salt Lake City	ar 6:45am
6:45am	due Reno	due 6:50pm
12:00noon	ar Sacramento	lv 2:15pm
12:15pm	lv Sacramento	ar 2:05pm
2:20pm	ar Oakland	lv 12:20pm

The Budd design allowed from 46 to 56 seats on the main seating level of a coach; whereas the ACF dome, as it was larger, reduced seating to only 36 in the coach model used on Union Pacific.

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OBTAINING EQUIPMENT:

The revived CZ runs would require 3 sets of equipment, making one round trip every 7 days, which is not bad utilization in comparison with SFZ equipment, which makes a round trip in 6 days. Total basic equipment requirement would then be 12 coaches, 12 sleepers, 4 diners, 4 lounges, and 4 baggage-dormitory cars. Observation-lounge cars would be added as embellishments.

Coaches: Delivery of new Turboliners will allow release of "conventional" Amtrak-rehabilitated cars. If this is insufficient, P-70 cars bumped from New York-Washington "corridor" service by delivery of the 492 new Metroshell cars could be rehabilitated and assigned to short-run trains such as the MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE and the Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha Service runs to allow release of equipment for the CZ.

Sleepers: Some 14 former CZ sleeping cars are now in operation in Mexico, on the NdeM and Pacific RR. Efforts should be made to re-acquire these cars. (One can only imagine Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, engaged in this small bicentennial effort, talking to the Mexican ambassador on the phone: "...yes, another one of our national errors of the 1960's...family heirlooms...need them for our bicentennial...I'm sure you'd never miss them...we could work out a good deal...") This would return ex-WP 10/6's "Silver Arroyo," "Mountain," "Palisade," "Range," "Surf," and "Bay"; ex-Rio Grande 10/6's "Silver Pass," "Summit," "Gorge," "Creek," and "Glacier"; ex-Rio Grande 6/5 "Silver Gull"; and ex-WP 6/5's "Silver Crane" and "Swallow."

Diners: I can think of at least five possible acquisitions: Of the 14 ex-TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR cars, Amtrak bought 12. The two dining cars, Q 196 and Q 197, were not taken. Ex-NP 459, which received marginal damage in the NORTH COAST LIMITED derailment in North Dakota, January, 1971, could also be repaired and returned to service. The two ex-SP&S lightweight diners, "Columbia" and "Willamette," could be used in CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR service.

Lounges: Three Amtrak dome sleeping cars, ex-B&O cars "Moonlight Dome," "Sunlight Dome" and "Starlight Dome," would be remodelled for the revived CZ service. Altho they should be prestige cars as important as the Turquoise Room-lounge cars on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED (SUPER CHIEF), they wander aimlessly around the western United States doing such menial tasks as substitute dormitory car or lounge car assignments.

The space under the dome would be converted to a bar, and the three 2-bedroom drawing rooms in the "long" end of the car would be removed, and replaced by a half-length lounge.

Two of these cars would be assigned Salt Lake City-Oakland, to meet SP's lean-and-roll requirements for low-profile domes. The third would operate Chicago-Denver. Zimmerman has reported that one ex-CZ dome-dormitory car has been sold to a private party in Blackfoot, Idaho. This should be repurchased and placed on the Chicago-Denver segment.

CHANGES WEST OF SALT LAKE:

As with Paul Rayton's proposal in the First March, 1975 issue of RTN, the assumption here is operation of CZ via Western Pacific between Salt Lake City and the SP-WP paired-track operation across Nevada, then via SP to Oakland.

Western Pacific president Al Perlman is now over 70 years of age, and his retirement may cause an improvement in the "climate" for passenger trains on WP. This could open the way for resumed operation thru the Feather River Canyon, and new Amtrak service to Portola, Keddie, Oroville and Marysville, which would improve Amtrak's overall revenues and restore this major scenic attraction to rail passengers. Operation west from Sacramento would be via SP.

Looking like part of the scenery, the westbound RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR enters Glenwood Canyon on Feb. 15, 1975. Photo by Paul Rayton from Kodacolor original.

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As with Paul Rayton's proposal in the First March, 1975 issue of RTN, the assumption here is operation of CZ via Western Pacific between Salt Lake City and the SP-WP paired-track operation across Nevada, then via SP to Oakland.

Western Pacific president Al Perlman is now over 70 years of age, and his retirement may cause an improvement in the "climate" for passenger trains on WP. This could open the way for resumed operation thru the Feather River Canyon, and new Amtrak service to Portola, Keddie, Oroville and Marysville, which would improve Amtrak's overall revenues and restore this major scenic attraction to rail passengers. Operation west from Sacramento would be via SP.

Looking like part of the scenery, the westbound RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR enters Glenwood Canyon on Feb. 15, 1975. Photo by Paul Rayton from Kodacolor original.

OBTAINING EQUIPMENT:

The revived CZ runs would require 3 sets of equipment, making one round trip every 7 days, which is not bad utilization in comparison with SFZ equipment, which makes a round trip in 6 days. Total basic equipment requirement would then be 12 coaches, 12 sleepers, 4 diners, 4 lounges, and 4 baggage-dormitory cars. Observation-lounge cars would be added as embellishments.

Coaches: Delivery of new Turboliners will allow release of "conventional" Amtrak-rehabilitated cars. If this is insufficient, P-70 cars bumped from New York-Washington "corridor" service by delivery of the 492 new Metroshell cars could be rehabilitated and assigned to short-run trains such as the MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE and the Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha Service runs to allow release of equipment for the CZ.

Sleepers: Some 14 former CZ sleeping cars are now in operation in Mexico, on the NdeM and Pacific RR. Efforts should be made to re-acquire these cars. (One can only imagine Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, engaged in this small bicentennial effort, talking to the Mexican ambassador on the phone: "...yes, another one of our national errors of the 1960's...family heirlooms...need them for our bicentennial...I'm sure you'd never miss them...we could work out a good deal...") This would return ex-WP 10/6's "Silver Arroyo," "Mountain," "Palisade," "Range," "Surf," and "Bay"; ex-Rio Grande 10/6's "Silver Pass," "Summit," "Gorge," "Creek," and "Glacier"; ex-Rio Grande 6/5 "Silver Gull"; and ex-WP 6/5's "Silver Crane" and "Swallow."

Diners: I can think of at least five possible acquisitions: Of the 14 ex-TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR cars, Amtrak bought 12. The two dining cars, Q 196 and Q 197, were not taken. Ex-NP 459, which received marginal damage in the NORTH COAST LIMITED derailment in North Dakota, January, 1971, could also be repaired and returned to service. The two ex-SP&S lightweight diners, "Columbia" and "Willamette," could be used in CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR service.

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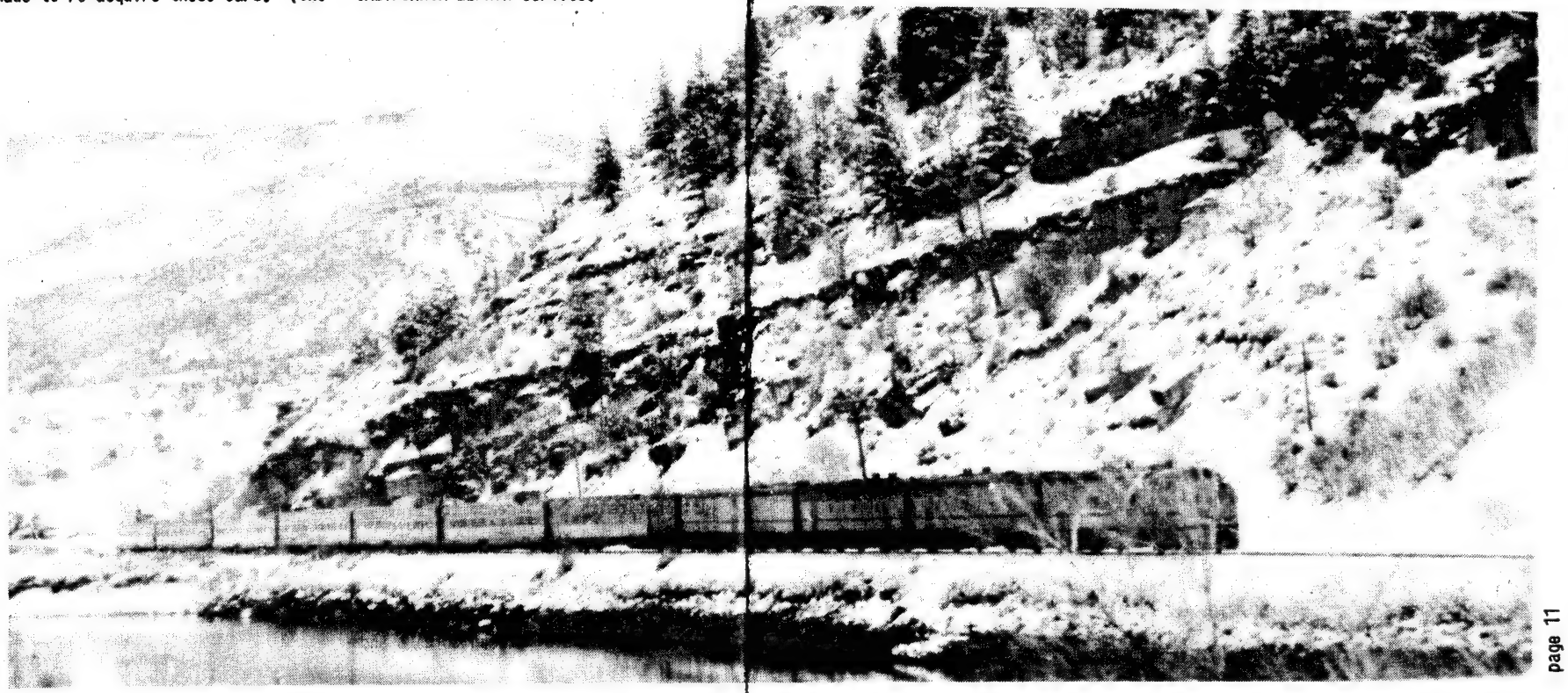

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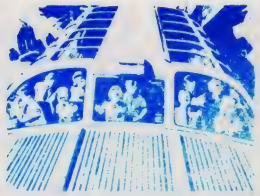

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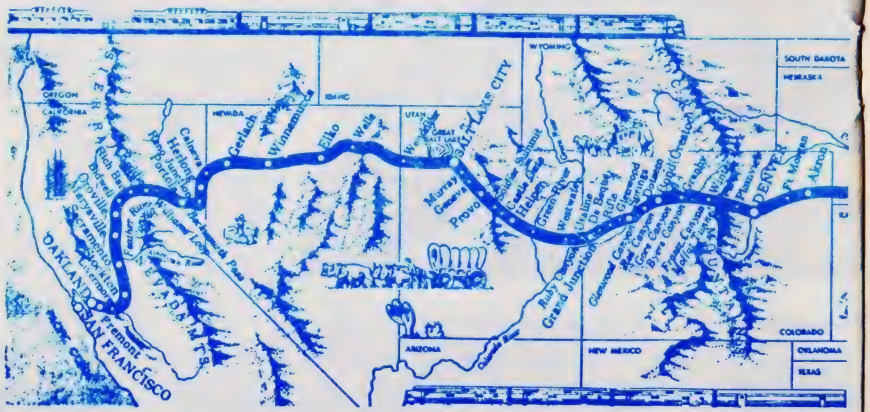

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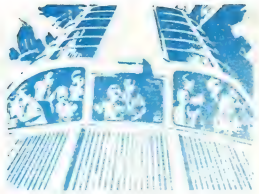

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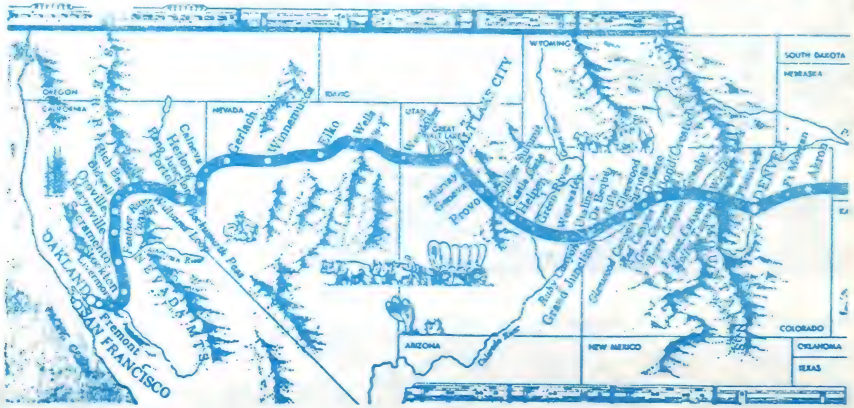

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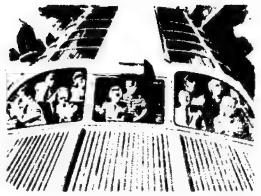

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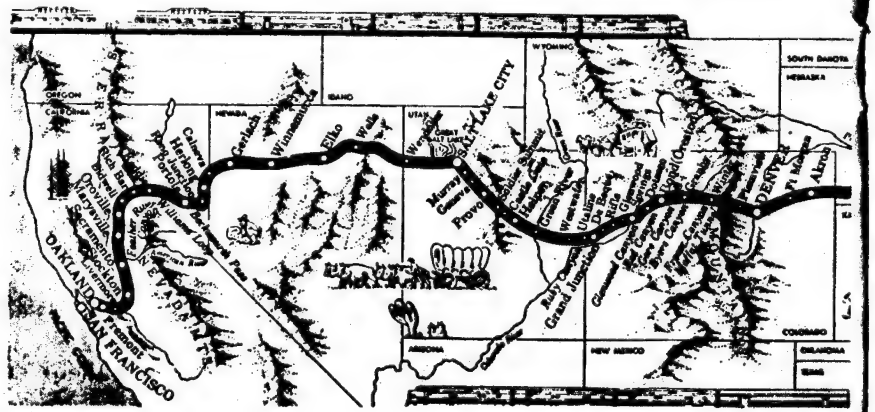

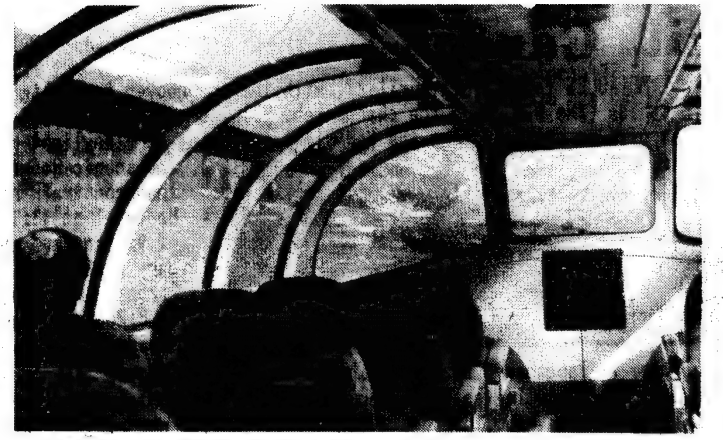

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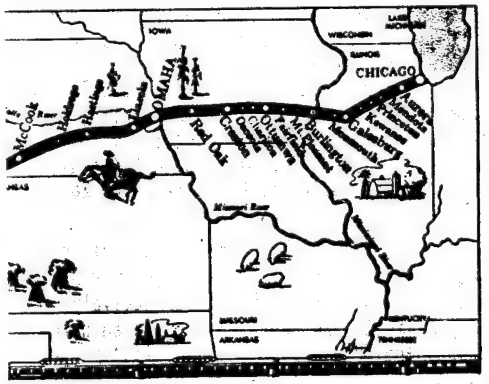

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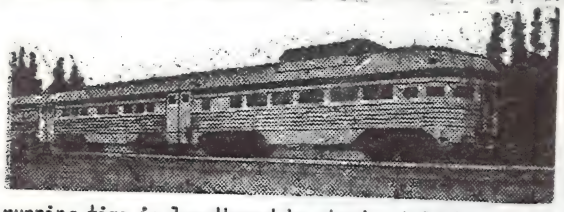
Rail Canada

THE NEW TIMETABLES took effect April 27, with the changeover to Daylight Saving Time in Canada (the U.S. made the change Feb. 23). CP Rail advertised its new schedules with an emphasis upon the CANADIAN's spending more daylight hours in the scenic Rockies. The transcon train now leaves Montreal at 11:15am instead of 1:40pm, and reaches Calgary at 12:20pm instead of 2:25pm. Vancouver arrival is 8:25am, changed from 10:30am. The westbound running time is lengthened by about a half hour, the eastbound time by 45 minutes. Eastbound train 2 now leaves Vancouver at 5:45pm instead of 6:30pm, and reaches Montreal at the same hour, 8:05pm. Contrary to earlier reports, the ATLANTIC LIMITED remains an overnight train with sleeping cars. In the heavy summer period, June 14 thru Sept. 14, CP Rail breaks the connection between the eastbound CANADIAN and the Montreal-Saint John, N.B. ATLANTIC LIMITED (train 40 in summer, train 42 at other times). Westbound the trains still connect.



MEANWHILE, CANADIAN NATIONAL is advertising that its SUPER CONTINENTAL now goes thru the "heart of the Rockies" in daylight (the complete schedule has not yet arrived here as of this writing). Ads emphasize fare savings on red, white and blue days. "CN trains big, warm and friendly" reads CN ad copy: "Take it easy--Take the train."

"DOES CANADA STILL have a transcontinental train in operation?" is found to be high on the list of the 10 questions about Canada asked of American travel experts. Judging from this report (from the Seattle Times), Canadian railways are not having as much advertising impact south of the border as they might think. One difficulty may be the scarcity of Canadian railway ticket offices in the U.S.

OUR LAST ISSUE reported on the April 4 blizzard and its relatively minor effect upon rail service. Reader James Elmleaf of Troy, Michigan disagrees that all the trains kept running without problems: "I was a passenger on the OCEAN (#15), and along with 400-500 other people spent 17 hours snowbound near Ste. Charles, Quebec. There was no heat for the entire duration (the train was already 3 hours late and due to water in Levis, just 30 miles away). The dining car crew performed most admirably, feeding three meals to everyone, gratis. When #15 arrived in Montreal, 27 hours late, those passengers going on to Toronto were most pleased to see that the Rapido was held 1½ hours to take them immediately on their way."

OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS in the B.C. Legislature are opposing the government's move to place the recently acquired steamer "Princess Marguerite" in a separate, and newly-formed Crown Corporation to be called "B.C. Steamships." Hugh Curtis, Social Credit MLA from Saanich, a Victoria suburb, called the decision "incredible." Resources Minister Bob Williams, whose department will operate the "Marguerite," hinted that additional ships might be purchased. When asked about this by the press, Williams replied: "You never know." If the May 23 startup date is not met, the ship will begin operating on the first possible date, perhaps May 27 or 28 from Seattle.

LATE REPORTS INDICATE that CN has once again decided not to operate its "Prince George" cruise ship on the Vancouver-Alaska run this summer. After deciding to try to meet the schedule following a fire on board April 4, CN has tentatively decided to give up due to an inability to eliminate the smell of smoke aboard the vessel. Many passengers are being booked aboard CP's "Princess Patricia."

CP RAIL REVISED schedules of its Esquimalt & Nanaimo RDC car on Vancouver Island. Starting April 28, the car leaves Courtenay 8am, arriving Victoria 12:10pm. Return is 5pm from Victoria, arriving Courtney 9pm. The schedule has been requested by many public groups who complained that the car had run the "wrong way," leaving Victoria in the morning. CP's initial revised schedule, which called for an overnight layover at Nanaimo on the northbound run, was cancelled after protests. The RDC run now makes connections both ways with Seattle-Victoria "Princess Marguerite" schedules.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY runs were halted in April by demonstrating Indians blockading the tracks. The demonstrations were to protest government negotiations over land claims. Meanwhile, a study of the government-owned railway claimed that "incompetent bungling" has marked the railway's operation over the last two decades and that two extensions of the line were wrongly placed.

GOVERNMENT AND RAIL officials from Canada met met with top U.S. Railway Association officials in Washington DC April 25 to discuss cross-border traffic in the light of rail revisions surrounding the Northeast rail bankruptcies. Included in the agenda were talks on the 15-mile Leamington-Comber and 17-mile Amherstburg-Essex lines in the Windsor, Ont. area, which the Chessie System has asked to take over from PC.

Urban-Suburban Transit

THE STRANGE-APPEARING train pictured above, with cars higher in the middle than the ends, is a double-deck commuter vehicle being designed by Siddeley Hawker Canada Ltd. with an eye to GO Train service in the Toronto area. Train is designed for push-pull operation, and cars hold 164 passengers, compared to the present 94. Double-deck cars have a split-level design, a la Amtrak's bi-levels.

INTERESTING, PERHAPS IMPORTANT analysis of why Los Angeles voted down a transit system last November appears in Coast magazine (May), by Prof. Peter Marcuse, urban planner at UCLA. Among the reasons why the increased sales tax lost, according to Marcuse, was the conclusion by voters that a BART-type system would serve mainly an elitist group, that certain property holders would benefit from it inordinately, and that it really wouldn't have enough impact on traffic problems. Quote: "A mass transit system can be immediate bread-and-butter transportation for the masses, or it can be far-off luxury transit for the few, paid for by the many --and the latter is the way Los Angeles voters saw the SCRTD proposal in 1974."

CONGRESS HAS DEFEATED a proposal to tax new cars on the basis of their gasoline economy, as part of an energy-tax package bill still under consideration.

FRANK C. HERRINGER of UMTA, who is taking over July 1 as head of BART at a salary of $68,500, held a press conference in San Francisco April 30, and while talking to reporters in the Powell Street station, was confronted with a train breaking down near him, which in turn blocked others, including a loaded train in the trans-bay tube. Herringer told reporters, "There is no reason I know of that the Bay Area should not have the finest public transportation in the world."

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC DEATHS are increasing again due to more, farther and faster driving, reports the NY Times. The first 4 months of 1975 saw about 13,500 persons die, about 7% more than in the same period of 1974.

RIDING THE 'NEW' ADIRONDACK

BY DAVID ROSS

Sunday, April 27 was the first run of the "new" ADIRONDACK to Montreal, and I decided to sample the inaugural runs of the Delaware & Hudson dining cars out of Grand Central. Until then the Montreal passengers had departed GCT at 8:30am aboard the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, as often as not having to change at Albany-Rensselaer because no thru car had been provided even tho scheduled. Northbound, Montreal passengers could enjoy the EMPIRE STATE's dining car (ex-CZ 8051 has recently been running in this service) until the D&H Skyline coffee shop was added to the Canadian section at Albany; southbound, passengers had been forced to survive the dinner hour with a poorly stocked Amtrak snack bar coach. The April 27 timetable provides for the ADIRONDACK to operate as a separate train in both directions, with the recently-renovated D&H dining cars running thru into GCT.

The first northbound run was a disappointment. Because of some malfunction, the diner had not been sent south the night before, so the train makeup was PC FL-9 #328 (in New Haven colors), Amtrak snack bar 3959, New York MTA coach 2454, and D&H coach 34. A modest crowd boarded. We picked up a dribbling of people along the way, and arrived in Albany some 10min late with about 30 going further north. The weather, which had been beautiful for the scenic ride up the Hudson, was assuming its normal upstate sullenness, and a breezy chill set in as the station switcher remade the train with D&H PA #19, D&H diner 41 "Saratoga Inn," MTA coach 3270, and the 2454 and 34 carried thru from New York. I headed directly for the diner to beg a quick lunch in the 45min before arrival in Mechanicville, my destination for the day.

I must say I was shocked. The ex-Rio Grande diner lounge had been rebuilt by Hoover Interiors in Miami into what I believe is the prettiest dining car running on Amtrak today. The exterior is smoothside, the original fluting having been removed when body cancer was discovered during rebuilding, and the highly polished blue and yellow color scheme of D&H was stunning. Inside, the predominant colors are chocolate and red, with the rich brown carpeting covering the floor and most walls. The dining end has had the original triangular tables replaced with six standard 4-person tables, each with a table lamp. The table cloths are yellow with standard Amtrak red and blue napkins. The lounge end has been reconfigured into a miniature version of Amtrak's pubs, with the same warm colors and a variety of single, 2-person and 4-person conversation groupings. The large pub chairs give the room a slightly cluttered look, but the effect is inviting. Drapes hang between windows in both the dining and pub ends of the car.

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RIDING THE 'NEW' ADIRONDACK

BY DAVID ROSS

Sunday, April 27 was the first run of the "new" ADIRONDACK to Montreal, and I decided to sample the inaugural runs of the Delaware & Hudson dining cars out of Grand Central. Until then the Montreal passengers had departed GCT at 8:30am aboard the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, as often as not having to change at Albany-Rensselaer because no thru car had been provided even tho scheduled. Northbound, Montreal passengers could enjoy the EMPIRE STATE's dining car (ex-CZ 8051 has recently been running in this service) until the D&H Skyline coffee shop was added to the Canadian section at Albany; southbound, passengers had been forced to survive the dinner hour with a poorly stocked Amtrak snack bar coach. The April 27 timetable provides for the ADIRONDACK to operate as a separate train in both directions, with the recently-renovated D&H dining cars running thru into GCT.

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